

~~SECRET~~

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ 13 June 1955

Part of recent review 7/2/55

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT: The French North African Situation

1. At least since the publication of NIE-69 in September, 1952, the intelligence community has been warning of the increasing gravity of the North African problem. Particular stress has been placed on the probable inability of the French to undertake sufficiently liberal measures to resolve the difficulties in this area. NIE 71-54, "Probable Developments in North Africa" (31 August 1954) did not differ substantially in its conclusions from NIE-69, which it superseded. We believe that current events confirm the analysis of the overall situation expressed in NIE 71-54, which was an estimate of probable developments in North Africa over the long run.

2. The new developments in the North African situation since publication of NIE 71-54 are: (a) the grant of autonomy by France to Tunisia, (b) the outbreak of violence in Algeria, (c) the reported defection of a few of France's native troops, (d) the transfer of French NATO forces with some MDAP equipment to North Africa, and (e) intensified French irritation with the US for not giving strong support to French policy. These developments are in line with the conclusions in NIE 71-54 except for the unexpected outburst of violence in Algeria. Our intelligence on the nature and extent of dissidence in Algeria is scanty. Probably not more than a few thousand Algerians are engaged in rebellious activities; it is likely that a considerable number of these are either "fellagah" from Tunisia or natives accustomed to a life of near-banditry in eastern Algeria. It is clear, however, that these "terrorists" constitute a nationalist threat well out of proportion to their numbers and character. With respect to the loyalty of native troops, we have no firm evidence of any clear-cut cases of premeditated desertion by French native troops, but French action to forestall disloyalty by shifting such troops from their home countries may actually stimulate discontent.

3. A revision of our estimate on French North Africa is presently scheduled (IAC-D-1/11) for production in the first quarter of 1956. We do not consider that there is sufficient new evidence to warrant

~~SECRET~~

DOCUMENT NO. 2
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐
☐ DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS C
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 1996
DATE 7-5-80 REVIEWER: 372044

~~SECRET~~

producing that estimate at an earlier date. An NIE undertaken to supersede NIE 71-54 at this time would almost certainly repeat the conclusions of its predecessor. Therefore, we recommend adhering to the present scheduling, which will permit a clearer view of the Algerian problem and of the fate of Tunisian "internal autonomy".

FOR THE BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES: 25X1A9a

SHERMAN KENT
Assistant Director
National Estimates

~~SECRET~~